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## HYPNUM OCCIDENTALE S. & L.

In Bull. Torr. Club, 17:277. 1890, N. C. Kindberg described *Thuidium Vancouveriense* as a new species from Vancouver Island. In Cat. Can. Plants, 6:183. 1892, the same plant is described as *Heterocladium Vancouveriense*, and in Eur. & N. Amer. Bryineæ it is referred to the author's new genus, *Pseudoleskella*. It turns out, however, that this supposed new species, which has done good service in three genera in no less than six years, is identical with *Hypnum occidentale* S. & L., described and figured in Icon. Musc. Supp. 105. *pl. 81*. 1874, as an authentic specimen from Dr. Kindberg, which I owe to the kindness of Prof. J. M. Holzinger, and a portion of Sullivant's type, which I owe to the courtesy of Mrs. Britton, clearly prove. *Thuidium Vancouveriense* must therefore be relegated to the long list of synonyms for which we have to thank our worthy trans-atlantic confreres, and which might easily have been avoided, had all of them been as anxious to ascertain what American bryologists have done, as some of them have been eager to make new species of American mosses.—G. N. Best.

## LICHENS—THE USNEAS.

In commencing our study of lichens, it has been thought best to begin with *Usnea* and some of the varieties, as they are so generally called mosses.

The so-called Florida moss which grows so luxuriantly on the trees in the Southern States, is often supposed to be a lichen. It is, in fact, a flowering plant, and belongs to the Bromeliaceae, or Pineapple family. Its botanical name is *Tillandsia usneoides*, the specific name indicating its resemblance to *Usnea*.

Some botanists think lichens are only a higher order of fungi, others who have studied them closely accord them a place by themselves, between the fungi and mosses.\*

A lichen is composed of an alga and a fungus, the alga supplying chlorophyll or green matter, the fungus absorbing moisture from the atmosphere and mineral substances from the substratum. The two live together in what is called a symbiotic relationship, the one necessary to the life and development of the other.

As this article is intended for beginners in the study of these interesting plants, a few definitions of the principal parts of *Usnea* may be helpful.

The *thallus* is the vegetative portion, taking the place of the stem and branches in the flowering plants. In *Usnea* it is fruticose or shrub-like. In some species it is erect and rather rigid, in others it is pendulous and soft, and through the centre runs a white cottony substance which is called the medullary cord.

*Fibrils* are the fine hair-like branches found on the main thallus. In some species these are stiff, in others they are soft. Fibrils are also found on the margin of the apothecia.

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\* Instructions for collecting and mounting lichens can be found in Asa Gray Bulletin, Vol. VI, No. 1, February, 1898.